

Section-by-Section

H.R. 875

Purpose: To provide for a comprehensive assessment of the scientific and technical research on the implications of the use of mid-level ethanol blends, and for other purposes.

Section 1: Definitions

Section 1 provides definitions, including: “Administrator” and “Mid-Level Ethanol Blend.”

Section 2: Evaluation

Section 2 (a) requires the Administrator, acting through the Assistant Administrator of the Office of Research and Development at the Environmental Protection Agency to: (1) enter into an agreement with the National Academies of Sciences to provide a comprehensive assessment of the scientific and technical research on the implication of the use of mid-level ethanol blends, including a comparison of mid-level ethanol blends to gasoline containing ten percent or zero percent ethanol; and (2) transmit the report to the Committee on Science, Space and Technology and the Committee on Environment and Public Works within thirty days of receiving the results, along with the disagreement or agreement of the Administrator with the findings.

Section 2 (b) invalidates any waiver granted by the Agency prior to enactment under section 211 (f) (4) of the Clean Air Act that allows the introduction into commerce of mid-level ethanol blends. The Administrator is prohibited from granting new waivers under section 211 (f) (4) until after the submission of the report described in subsection (a) (2).

Section 2 (c) requires the assessment performed under subsection (a) include:

(1) an evaluation of the short and long-term environmental, safety, durability, and performance effects of the introduction of mid-level ethanol blends on onroad, nonroad, and marine engines, vehicles, and related equipment. The evaluation shall also include consideration of the impacts of qualifying mid-level ethanol blends or blends with higher ethanol concentration as a certification fuel, and a review of all available scientific evidence, including all relevant government and industry data and testing, including that which was relied upon by the Administrator and published in the federal register. Additionally, the study shall identify gaps in understanding and research needs related to (A) tailpipe emissions; (B) evaporative systems; (C) engine and fuel system durability; (D) onboard diagnostics; (E) emissions inventory and other modeling effects; (F) materials compatibility; (G) operability and drivability; (H) fuel efficiency; (J) consumer education and satisfaction; (K) cost-effectiveness for the consumer; (L) catalyst durability; and (M) durability of storage tanks, piping, and dispensers for retail.

The study shall also include: (2) An identification of areas of research, development, and testing necessary to (A) ensure that existing motor fuel infrastructure is not adversely impacted by mid-level ethanol blends; and (B) reduce the risk of misfueling by users at various points in the distribution and supply chain by: (i) assessing the best methods and practices to prevent misfueling; (ii) examining misfueling mitigation strategies for blender pumps; (iii) assessing the adequacy and ability of misfueling mitigations plans approved by EPA; and (iv) examining the

technical standards and recommendation of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the American National Standards Institute, and the International Organization for Standardization regarding fuel pump labeling.

Section 3: Authorization of Appropriations

Section 3 requires the Administrator utilize up to \$900,000 from the funds made available for science and technology, including research and development activities, at the Environmental Protection Agency to carry out this Act.